

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MINUTES – NOVEMBER 16, 2005

Chairman Christopher Dollar called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

**Approval for Minutes from October 2005 Meeting**

- The October 2005 Meeting Minutes were adopted with one change on page-two:
  - 1) Under agenda topic “Old Business” – The statement should read: *“this is the kind of item that should come to the Commission from the Urban Wildlife Subcommittee.”*

**Maryland Farm Bureau Report**

- Presentation given by Kurt Fuchs, Maryland Farm Bureau (MFB).
  - (a) MFB policies process has continued with fewer wildlife policies.
    - (i) Members would like to see a longer deer firearms season to control the deer herd.
    - (ii) New policy was submitted to support the FHFH Program and increase State funds.
    - (iii) Goose Seasons – DNR was urged to do more to control the resident geese in Maryland by:
      - a. Authorizing additional resident goose hunting dates,
      - b. Including but not limited to a spring April hunting season,
      - c. Increasing the bag limits during those dates or by other means limiting and reducing reproduction.
  - (b) Such policies will be debated at the Maryland Farm Bureau Convention in Ocean City this winter.
  - (c) Prioritizing policies will be determined for MFB legislative agenda.
  - (d) The MFB members are concerned about Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) – Wildlife and Heritage Service will provide a staff member to speak at the Convention.
  - (e) Crop Damage Survey Questions – results will be ready after the first of the year.
  - (f) Ag. Commission is making progress – first draft of the strategy report is due on December 16, 2005 for MFB members to review. Their progress is as follows:
    - (i) Adequate land base for the farmers
    - (ii) Increase research and education components, from the University of Maryland, Cooperative Extension.
- MFB Policy Development Process:
  - 1) In mid-October, the Government Relations staff gathered information on local and national issues of concern for Maryland constituencies.
  - 2) These issues then are passed to the FB Sub-County Committee for policies – prioritize issues (local, state, and national) per county.
  - 3) Each Sub-County Committee has to approve the resolutions and then submit the resolutions to the Maryland Farm Bureau
  - 4) MFB Public Affairs Committee reviews the recommendations from each Sub-County Committee; then the Public Affairs Committee compiles the suggestions for the (MFB) Board of Directors.
  - 5) The Board of Directors has the authority to approve and disapprove.
  - 6) The county sends delegates to vote on the policies for the Maryland Farm Bureau legislative process.
- Crop Insurance is not an issue for Maryland farmers at this time.

**Habitat Conservation Program Update**

- Presentation given by Jonathan McKnight, Associate Director, Habitat Conservation [Attachment A].
- Habitat Conservation Program Objectives:
  - 1) Conservation of wildlife habitat on private lands through voluntary incentives,
  - 2) Protection of native ecosystems through the control and prevention of invasive species,
  - 3) Restoration of habitats and resources damaged by ecological disaster or degradation.
- Funding Resources:
  - 1) Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a voluntary, incentive-based system that compensates farm landowners for establishing stream buffers, wetlands, and other conservation practices on cropland or pasture.
  - 2) Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) provides funding for private landowners to install conservation practices for rare, threatened, and endangered species.
- Mute Swans:
  - 1) Mute Swans drive native colonial birds away, preventing the native species from using traditional nesting and feed areas.
  - 2) Mute Swans feed exclusively on submerged aquatic vegetation SAV.
  - 3) The mute swan population increased dramatically between 1986 and 1999. The peak increase was observed during the absence of management.
  - 4) The Department is actively taking adult mute swans in various areas. The Department is using humane methods (Advanced within Veterinary Medical Guidelines) to reduce the mute swan population. The many hundreds of mute swans taken are within the management plan recommendations.

- Chairman Dollar suggested that this informative presentation given by Jonathan McKnight should be made available for the general public to download.

**Break from 10:25 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.**

**Wildlife Regional Operations Program Update**

- Presentation given by Pete Jayne, Associate Director, Regional Operations Program [**Attachment B**].
- Regional Operations is the operational “soul” of the WHS.
- Regional Operations is the largest program in the unit.
- Regional Operations Program has forty-three staff members located at sixteen offices throughout the State.
- The Regional Operations consist of wide variety of job classifications, but most are natural resources technicians.
- Customer service is important to the Wildlife Regional Operations Program staff members.
- Regional Operations staff members respond to wildlife emergencies 24/7:
  - 1) Disease outbreaks
  - 2) Nuisance animals
  - 3) Injured animals
  - 4) Animal damage control
- Another important Regional Operations mission is participating in outreach events; for example, Junior Hunt Days, Becoming an Outdoor Woman, and the State Fair.
- Regional Operations also assist other programs with fieldwork.
- Individuals wanting to volunteer their time should contact Ms. Paula Becker at (410) 260-8540.
- During Isabel, many waterfowl blinds in the Southern Region were destroyed; the blinds that were schedule to be rebuilt have been completed.

**Wild Turkey Advisory Committee Report**

- Presentation given by Bob Long, Upland Game Bird Project Manager
- Chairman Dollar spoke with Mr. Gilford from the Wild Turkey Advisory Committee; unfortunately, Mr. Gilford could not attend the WAC meeting on November 16, 2005. Mr. Gilford requested that an invitation should be given with in advance notice. Mr. Gilford will be added to the WAC email list.
- Updated the committee on the population data. The committee meets once a year. The committee provides valuable upland game species input and recommendations to Mr. Bob Long.
- The 2004 November Wild Turkey Advisory Committee Meeting had an attendance of eleven members.
- Wildlife Turkey Advisory Committee (WTAC) Highlighted Points [**Appendix I**].
  - 1) The electronic turkey check-in system has been discussed in previous meetings.
  - 2) The committee has begun preliminary discussion on:
    - (a) The Wild Turkey Habitat Management Guide,
    - (b) Discussion on a spring turkey survey,
    - (c) Harvest and population data,
    - (d) Turkey Relocation Program,
    - (e) Discussion on the declining numbers of wild turkeys in Western, Maryland.

**Maryland Park Service Update**

- No Report

**Natural Resources Police Update**

- Sergeant Kelley Johnson emailed the Natural Resources Police Update from October 24, 2005 through November 14, 2005 [**Appendix II**].

**Old Business**

- Commissioner Lowell Adams drafted a letter to the Urban Wildlife Subcommittee membership. The Commission has compiled a good list of names for consideration. Chairman Dollar mentioned a few pending housekeeping items; such as, the duration of term and meetings frequency – WAC members may have the Urban Wildlife Subcommittee members make those types of decisions.
- Discussion ensued regarding members for the Urban Wildlife Subcommittee from Maryland Sportsmen’s Association, local delegates or representatives, U.S. Department Agriculture, and a Nuisance Wildlife Cooperator. WAC members should contact the individuals on the recommended members list by telephone to confirm nominations and their interest in serving. The tentative deadline was for the beginning 2006 year.

### New Business

- Commissioner Pascal had requested a discussion on the trophy deer management concept. Unfortunately he was not present due to the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses Second Annual Meeting.
- Maryland Deer Management & Quality Deer Management [**Attachment C**] – presentation given by Doug Hotton, Deer Project Supervisor.
  - a. Public meetings were held with private landowners in 2001 to outline what is and what is not quality deer management.
  - b. Surveyed 531 Kent County landowners to gather data on whether landowners would support quality deer management regulations. The survey demonstrated hunters were not in support of trophy deer regulations.
  - c. Provided quality deer management statistical data from New Jersey and Mississippi.
  - d. The Deer Project staff will conduct another survey during the next fiscal year to gather public input on many of the deer hunting issues.
- Chairman Dollar was asked by Secretary Franks to have the members discuss age limits for hunting.
  - a. Nationwide efforts are ongoing to encourage outdoor activities (fishing and hunting) for young people.
  - b. Commissioner Adams suggested member's research old WAC minutes for the same topic because it was discussed during Commission Adams tenure.
  - c. Commissioner Lamp handed out copies of various data and memoranda he had compiled over the years. [**Attachment D**].
  - d. Commissioner Lamp passed out copies of the Maryland Hunting License Holders from 1983-2003 [**Attachment E**].
  - e. See inserts from January [**Appendix III**], February [**Appendix IV**], March [**Appendix V**], and July [**Appendix IV**] of 1998 for previous discussion points on the age limits for obtaining hunting licenses in Maryland.
- Chairman Dollar resigned as the Wildlife Advisory Commission Chairman. Chairman Dollar expressed sincere gratitude and comments to the WHS staff and the members of the Commission. The Wildlife and Heritage Service is sincerely thankful to Commissioner Dollar for his many volunteer hours and dedication towards preserving Maryland's Natural Resources through his tenure.
- **Motion:** Commissioner Dollar nominated Commissioner V. Wilson Freeland as the next Chairman. Commissioner Lawrence Julio seconded. Motion passed. Commissioner V. Wilson Freeland was nominated as the new chairman of the Wildlife Advisory Commission.
- Mr. Daniel Baker III asked the Commission to review the Captive Reared Mallard Release Policy. Commissioner Dollar suggested Mr. Baker, member of the Maryland Outfitter and Guides Association; work with Chairman Ladd Johnson, Migratory Game Bird Committee first regarding changes to the Captive Reared Mallard Release Policy.

### Adjournment

- Chairman Dollar adjourned meeting at 12:03 P.M. The next meeting will be held at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, February 15, 2006 in the Tawes State Office Building, C-1 Conference Room, in Annapolis, Maryland.

### Attendance

Members:	L. Adams, C. Dollar, W. Freeland, L. Julio, J. Lamp
Guests:	D. Baker III, K. Fuchs
Staff:	B. Beyer, K. Blizzard, M. Hoffman, D. Hotton, P. Jayne, B. Long, J. McKnight, T. Spencer
Absent:	R. Brown, G. Fratz, C. Garner, R. Pascal, J. Scarborough